

## Message Text

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64

ACTION DPW-01

INFO OCT-01 EA-11 ISO-00 IO-14 AID-20 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 ACDA-19 SR-02 ORM-03

DRC-01 /149 W

----- 102186

R 290300Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8462

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

CDR JCRC NKP THAI

USDEL FPJMT SAIGON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MOPS VS

SUBJECT: LEAGUE OF FAMILIES VISIT

REF: STATE 191696

### 1. BEGIN SUMMARY.

DUPRING OCTOBER 21-25 VISIT TO SAIGON

NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES GROUP MEMBERS MRS. PLASSMEYER AND MRS. MCCAIN MET WITH CHIEFS OF PRG, DRV, AND RVN DELEGATIONS TO THE FPJMT WAS WELL AS USAID ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION, IN AN EFFORT TO DEVELOP INFORMATION ON US MIA IN SOUTH VIET-NAM. THE LADIES APPEARED SATISFIED THAT JCRC AND USDEL FPJMT WERE DOING ALL THEY COULD TO RESOLVE MIA SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

2. MR CUTHBERT, MRS PLASSMEYER AND MRS MCCAIN MEMBERS OF NATIONAL LEAGUE OF FAMILIES GROUP WHICH VISITED THAILAND AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LAOS EARLIER IN MONTH ARRIVED IN SAIGON OCTOBER 21 TO SEEK IN-

FORMATION REGARDING THEIR MIA RELATIVES. USDEL FPJMT ARRANGED FOR MRS PLASSEMYER AND MRS MCCAIN TO MEET WITH PRG AND DRV DELEGATIONS TO THE FPJMT ON OCTOBER 23. (MR. CUTHBERT HAD ALREADY DEPARTED FOR THE US). AT INSISTENCE OF PRG AND DRV DELEGATIONS, MRS MCCAIN AND MRS PLASSEMYER WERE UNACCOMPANIED DURING THEIR CALLS. TALKING TO MISSION OFFICERS AFTERWARD THE LADIES STATED THAT THEY HAD 90 MINUTE MEETINGS WITH THE CHIEFS OF THE PRG AND DRV DELEGATIONS. THE LADIES WERE QUITE CRITICAL OF THE PRG AND DRV DELEGATION CHIEFS STATING THAT THEIR REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION WERE MET BY POLITE SMILES, POLITICAL LECTURES, AND EVASIVE ANSWERS, FOR INSTANCE, MRS MCCAIN SAID THAT SHE WAS DIRECTED TO SEEK INFORMATION FROM THE "AUTHORITIES IN CAMBODIA" REGARDING HER SON MIA IN HAU NGHIA PROVINCE.

3. THE LADIES WERE IMPRESSED WITH THE NEW CHIEF OF THE RVN DELEGATION TO THE FPJMT COLONEL NGHIA WHOM THEY MET ON OCTOBER 24. COLONEL NGHIA TOLD THE LADIES THAT HE PERSONALLY BELIEVED THERE WERE US PW'S PRESENTLY BEING HELD IN NORTH AND SOUTH VIET-NAM, LAOS, AND CAMBODIA. HE REFERRED TO STATEMENTS BY A RECENTLY RELEASED ARVN RANGER LIEUTENANT PRESENTLY UNDER GOING INTERROGATION THAT HE HAD SEEN AMERICAN PW'S WHILE BEING HELD CAPTIVE. WHEN QUERIED AS TO WHAT ACTION WAS BEING TAKEN ON THIS INFORMATION, COLONEL NGHIA INDICATED THAT THE REPORT MUST BE FIRST FULLY VERIFIED BEFORE BEING PASSED TO APPROPRIATE US AUTHORITIES. USDEL CHIEF, COLONEL TOMBAUGH, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, TOLD THE LADIES THAT THE USG HAD NO HARD INTELLIGENCE THAT WOULD LEAD US TO CONCLUDE THAT THERE ARE US PW NOW BEING HELD IN INDO CHINA (ASIDE FROM EMMET KAY). COLONEL TOMBAUGH ALSO EXPLAINED TO THE LADIES CURRENT PROCEDURES FOR CHANNELING MIA INFORMATION FROM RVN SOURCES TO US AGENCIES SUCH AS JCRC.

4. LATER ON OCTOBER 24 THE LADIES MET WITH THE USAID ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR RELIEF AND REHABILITATION TO URGE THAT REFUGEE GROUPS FROM AREAS OF US CRASH SITES BE TAPPED FOR INFORMATION. COMMENT: IN RESPONSE TO EMBASSY REQUESTS FOR ASSISTANCE THE MINISTRIES OF SOCIAL WELFARE AND ETHNIC MINORITIES, THE TWO MINISTRIES MOST DIRECTLY INVOLVED WITH REFUGEES, HAVE PROMISED FULL COOPERATION IN OUR EFFORTS TO DEVELOP MIA INFORMATION. END COMMENT.

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5. IN DISCUSSING THEIR VISIT WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS ON THE EVENING OF OCTOBER 24 PRIOR TO DEPARTING FOR THE US THE FOLLOWING DAY, MRS PLASSEMYER AND MRS MCCAIN EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE JOB THAT JCRC AND THE USDEL TO THE FPJMT WERE DOING UNDER THE PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES. THEY STATED THAT AS A RESULT OF THEIR MEETING WITH THE DRV AND PRG DELEGATIONS THEY HAD A MUCH BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE FRUSTRATIONS INVOLVED IN DEALING WITH THE COMMUNISTS.

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